



To start the New Year off right, Keistutis Chorus joined with Ateitis to give a New Year's party at T & T Hall on 39th & Kedzie. Our Committee: Bev and Terry Samas, Bob Treonis and Johnny Tamulonis worked hard to prepare the party. Details will be reported in the next issue. The ATEITIS New Year's resolution, however, is that we will make this a better dancing group and to show as many people as possible true Lithuanian dances.

Johnny Grubē, one of the Canadians, was severely injured in an auto accident. Filled with fears, Bev and Tee Samas rushed up to Canada to be at his bed-side (and hold his hand). When they arrived they found Toronto in the midst of a blizzard. Helen Kramer, who met them at the train, had to hitch-hike to the station; there wasn't a stretcher or cab to be had in town. When the twins arrived at the home of the supposedly "near dead" Johnny, they were told that he was in court fighting for his accident case. He has to walk, tho, on crutches for a while.

We missed Vyts while he was in Boston, however, rehearsals were not interrupted by his absence. In Kubilas we vied for the highest leap while stamping, Peter Daužvardis won. In Malunēlis Pete alternated with Bob Treonis as boy and girl. Pete took the girl's part for the weaving while Bob took the girl's part in the swings.

Golden tressed Ruth Sturbas got her physiognomy in the Daily News. Wearing a national costume she was portrayed admiring the Lithuanian Christmas tree. The Chicago papers, and all who saw that tree, likewise raved about its individuality.

On the 19th we held our last rehearsal for the year. Despite this we have had plenty of dancing as a group. Four couples took part in the Dec. 21st program at the Oak Forest Old Folks Home, sponsored by Mrs. Sofia Barcus. International House invited us to their Xmas party on the 26th. Now, I bid you all a Happy New Year.

Pasimatysim, Meilutė Žilis.

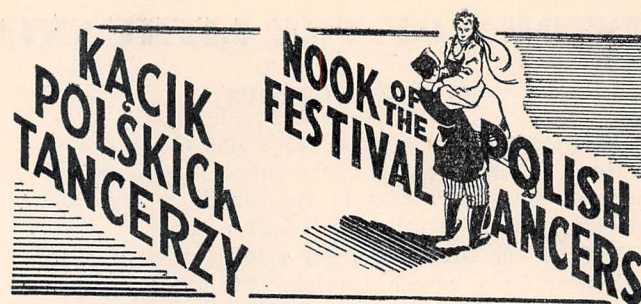
COMMENTS AND LETTERS

Dear Vyts:- Your Bob Treonis has given you some nice drawings. The pictures are always friendly and interesting. Your articles are wonderful. It was so interesting to me to read reports on the Lithuanian concerts. In other words, I think VILTIS is grand and I don't want to miss receiving it. Visados,
WENETTA (GRYBAS) CHILDS
SOLONA BEACH, CALIF.

Dear Mr. Beliajus:- You are doing a fine job with the magazine and we should all be proud of the enormous contribution to us, Lithuanians. Being of American birth, I find reading about Lithuanians in English seem to add something to our culture. Those that have never learned the Lithuanian language and who see the magazine feel a certain awakening of their heritage.

Again, we're proud of you. Keep up the good work and "Daug daug laimės". (Much, much luck)
Sincerely,
HYPATIA MACKEVICH, CHICAGO

Dear Vyts:- I thought you might be interested in knowing that I have been tracing the origin of the melody in Merry Dance "Shake Them 'Simmons Down" and believe that it must have come from a little "Fais do do" song which is still sung in parts of Louisiana, Mississippi, etc. The melody is very similar to the words: Fais do do, Fais do do, fais do do, Dans le bras ton mama. (or) Dans le bras ton papa!" etc. I also enjoyed the folk dance to the words "My father and mother were Irish", as I am especially interested in any variations on songs based on that melody which, as you probably know, is the old French "Malbrough s'en v-t-en guerre" one of France's historic ballads.
Cordially Yours,
MARY AGNES STAR, CAIRO, ILL.



Dzien dobry!

Echoes of our Polish Harvest Festival and Wedding. To date, we are still receiving compliments and congratulations on a job well done. Mr. Michael Rachwalski, the new Head Resident of the NUS, in appreciation, gave all the performers a party on December 3rd. It was a very nice affair with everyone having a very good time. Our sincere thanks to Mr. "Mike" Rachwalski and to Mrs. Helen Rachwalski who acted as hostess for a grand time.

On Wednesday, Dec. 17th all the PFD's attended a testimonial tea at the Settlement House expressing a tribute to Miss Harriet Vittum on the occasion of her retirement as head of the NUS. We all had a good time for we got to see and visit with many friends we haven't seen for a long time. The staff of the NUS gave Miss Vittum, who now has an apartment of her own, a kitchen shower and most of us had quite a time trying to decide the use of the many gadgets that were given to her. Another point of interest and admiration was a plaque presented to Miss Vittum by the Council of the City of Chicago, signed by Mayor Martin H. Kennelly. It is in a form of a n"illuminated page" artistically decorated with paintings and the Corporate Seal of the city of Chicago. and an expression of public appreciation of her work. The plaque was a public acknowledgement of her merits among the people of Chicago.

On Thursday, Dec. 18th, the PFD's had a Xmas party at the NUS. While waiting for everyone to arrive, we helped pack Xmas stockings with goodies that were given to the neighborhood children. After all the PFD's arrived we moved over into the "Guild Hall" where we really had a hilarious time with such party standbys as "Broomstick dances", "Jerusalem", "Poor-house" "Passing the hot plate" etc. Our appreciation to Jerry Wrobel who brought some of his phonograph records for dancing. We presented Vyts with a Xmas gift during the evening and we hope he liked it (Ah Sho nuff does. Tanx loads. Vyts). After everyone got very tired, refreshments were served. The coffee was made by Mr. Mike Rachwalski and it was a delicious brew. The committee for this affair consisted of Helen Arendt and Mary & Emily Czernek.

Our Xmas party was the culminating point of the PFD affairs for 1947. During the Xmas holidays our roaming teacher, Vyts, went to Cincinnati to conduct classes with a Co-op group up there. Helen Arendt, who is a Bicycling fan (she toured a large part of the USA and Canada on a bike), went for a reunion to Grand Rapids, Mich. with some of her friends whom she met on her bike trips. She left Chicago With her friend Alice Sanders. Helen, like Vyts, taught folk dancing to her friends in Michigan. She reports the trip to Grand Rapids was a huge success.

Now we close extending our sincerest wishes for 1948 to all our readers and to VILTIS.

— Dowidzenia
Mary and Emily Czernek

HISTORY OF THE LITHUANIAN POSTAGE STAMPS

MRS. KAZYS GRINIUS

While turning the leaves of my stamp album containing the Lithuanian collection, the entire short period of Lithuanian independence with its hardships, joys and tragic termination, revealed itself before me.

Here are the first 1918 white stamps. Their appearance is poor. They haveno drawings; the paper is not of good quality. But I must remember the condition under which they appeared. When the German Occupational Government handed over its reign to the newly formed Lithuanian government, they left no postage. In order not to disrupt postal communication, there was a need for some sort of a postage. So, within the nights of Dec. 25 and 26 of 1918, a format was made and a few bundles of 10 and 15 Skatikai value, 5000 of each, were printed in a private printing house in Vilna (Vilnius, Lithuania's capitol) and were on sale on the 27th, first appearing from the Vilna post office. Within a few days there were no more stamps left and the same printing establishment received an order to print the second issue. A greater amount of stamps were printed in additional denominations of 20, 30, 40 and 50 Sk. values. Both editions were similar, with the difference only in numeral script. It was thought that those stamps would suffice until the appearance of the regular stamps with drawings which T. Dau-girdas, director of the Kaunas Museum, with the aid of the artist Šimonis, were preparing. Since no printing firm in Lithuania was then equipped to print in colors, these stamps were published in Berlin, Germany, but the filling of the order was delayed and the Lithuanian postal authorities were forced to reprint the white stamps. Again the Governmental Publishers in Kaunas printed them, this time in the 10,15, 20 and 30 Sk. values.

Danger loomed on the horizon of the newly formed Lithuanian republic. A volunteer army was called and formed during the early part of 1919, to defend the land. Bolshevik forces invaded and occupied part of the country cutting off various cities from communication with the central government. At that time, the city of Raseiniai, through their local efforts, printed their own stamps carrying the legend "Raseinių Apskritis Pašto ženklas 15 Sk." (Postage stamp for the county of Raseiniai, 15 Sk.) It was printed on a blue-green field. They served for local need until communications were restored to normal.

Meanwhile, from Berlin arrived the first printed Lith. stamps of three values, 10, 15 and 30 Sk. Because Germany suffered of paper shortage the stamps were printed on a heavy gray paper. Berlin also suffered of labor strikes and further printing was delayed and the Lithuanian government was forced to print two more issues of the white stamps during February and March of 1919, each one of seven values. These white stamps, the two Vilna and three Kaunas editions, inspite of the impoverished and simple appearance, nevertheless, are sought by philatelists and paid for with high prices, for they were printed in small quantities. Of high value is also the first Berlin edition.

At last, in March of 1919, the second Berlin edition arrived, printed in ten serials and on heavy gray paper. The 3rd of 10 serials and the 4th (last Berlin edition) of 11 serials reached Lithuanian post office that same month of March when the white-paper editions were printed. These two serials differ somewhat in color and script.



That year Lithuania had to overcome another invasion. This time from the German supported Bermont-Avalov army which invaded northern Lithuania and cut off a part of Samogitia (Žemaitija). The city of Telšiai hectographed stamps on plain white writing paper, about one hundred sheets were issued and they were in use for a very brief period. This stamp now days has truly become a rarity, more so, because the purple hectographed letters fade.

(To be continued)

AS FOR MYSELF

Nearly missed my plane for Boston. I rose early, too early, but my watch chose to quit running 15 minutes before bus time to the air field. There I sat in the lobby of the Stevens Hotel until it dawned on me that my watch wasn't running. By then I was 20 minutes late for the bus. I hailed a cab which was reluctant to go to the air field due to the distance and slippery road and inability to make time. We even had all the stop lights against us, yet, we managed to reach the airport with five minutes to spare. To my chagrin, that plane was cancelled and I was rerouted on a plane to leave 45 minutes later. I began to wonder whether it was a warning from fate that I change my mind and take a train instead. However, I remembered a biblical passage that through fate even the walls of Jerich crumbled, so that was enough.

The plane was a four-engine 52 passenger machine of the United Air Lines. Until we reached Eastern Penna. the flight was one of the most delightful experiences. I sat near the window by the wing and the view was like those drawn in the story books. Chicago and that part of the country was the covered by a heavy mantle of snow and it was two above zero. The earth below appeared pure and lovely with every topographic contour clearly visible. When we climbed above the strato-cumulus clouds and every bit of view of earth was hidden, everything seemed even more peaceful and divine. With the sun shining above those clouds they glistened like the fancy Christmas decorative down. They seemed so compact and yet so soft and fleecy that they enticed a person to want to walk on them and roll in the softness. When we reached Pennsylvania the clouds were not as enchanting. They were dirty and in spots of a smoky brownish color and very forbidding. Often there were deep crevices between them showing land below which also appeared brown and ugly. We soon ran into a storm which then gave that part of the